

KRISSY KASSERMAN: Hi. I'm Krissy Kasserman. I live and work in former coal communities that are struggling to recover from massive decades of environmental devastation for both legacy sites and from those permitted under the current regulatory system. For decades coal companies have mined tons of coal, 40 percent of all coal burned in the U.S. power plants from our public lands. Most of the coal mined comes from grass lands, ranches, natural habitat, leases to mine underneath this land, encourages consumption of dirty fuels by artificially lowering the price at a time when we should be moving away from fossil fuels. What I want to talk about today, though, is the way that continued federal coal leasing diverts our attention from the real work, transitioning coal communities like mine to a clean energy future. The transition to a clean energy economy will create new jobs and new opportunities for those of us living in coal country. Some of these new jobs will be in reclamation, reclaiming and restoring old dangerous and polluted mine sites which foul our streams and create a danger to community. We want time and opportunity to assist communities in moving forward. And we can be using funds released by the U.S. government to manage the Federal Coal Leasing Program to enhance this transition or to restore these legacy sites. The Federal Coal Leasing program should be ended in order to save taxpayers money, protect public land and to begin the meaningful transition for coal communities here in Appalachian and beyond. I ask you to end taxpayer-funded coal leases on public lands and instead make this important and historic transition toward a clean energy economy. Thank you.